

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the objections and rejections set forth in the outstanding Office Action of January 10, 2005 is respectfully requested.

The Examiner objected to claims 42-45 due to an informality concerning the dependency of those claims, and rejected claim 29 as being indefinite due to lack of antecedent basis for one of the limitations recited in that claim. In order to address these matters, claims 42-45 and 29 have been amended as indicated above. In particular, the dependency of claims 42-45 has now been corrected (although claim 43 has been cancelled), and claim 29 has been amended so as to provide the necessary antecedent basis. In view of these amendments, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's objections and rejections based on formal grounds have been overcome.

In view of the Amendment filed October 27, 2004, claims 20-52 were pending and treated in the outstanding Office Action. In this regard, the Examiner rejected claims 20, 21, 23-27, 34, 35, 37-42, 44-47 and 49-52 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by the Hayashi reference (U.S.P. 6,359,235). However, the Examiner indicated that claims 28-33 would be allowable if amended to address the formal rejections discussed above, and that dependent claims 22, 36, 43, and 48 contain allowable subject matter. As a result, the claims have now been amended as indicated above. For the reasons discussed below, it is respectfully submitted that the amended claims are now clearly patentable over the prior art of record.

As an initial matter, the Examiner's formal rejection of dependent claim 29 has been addressed as indicated above. Therefore, it is submitted that independent claim 28 and dependent claims 29-33 are now in condition for allowance.

In addition, independent claims 20, 34, 41 and 46 have now been amended so as to incorporate the subject matter recited in allowable dependent claims 22, 36, 43, and 48, respectively, and those dependent claims have now been cancelled. In view of the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter, it is respectfully submitted that each of independent claims 20, 34, 41, and 46, and the claims that depend therefrom, are now clearly patentable over the prior art of record.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner should have any comments or suggestions to help speed the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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